97-84025-25

Sano Silk Filature

Sano Silk Filature in north-eastern Japan

[Tokyo?]

[1919?]

97-84025-25
MASTER NEGATIVE #

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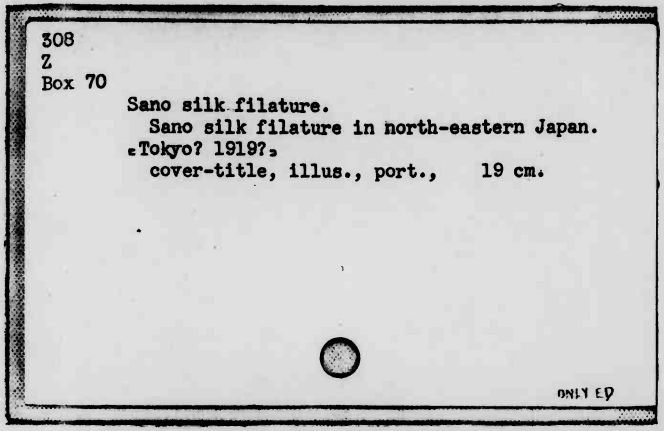

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SANO SILK FILATURE

IN NORTH-EASTERN JAPAN.

B4

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MR. R. SANO.

Present Proprietor of Sano Silk Filature.

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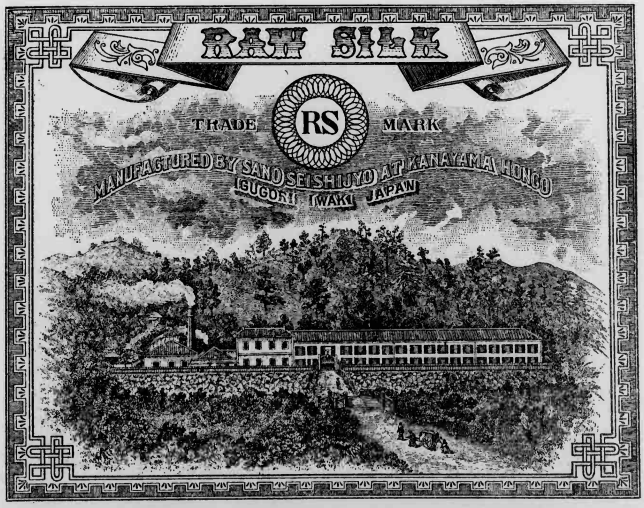
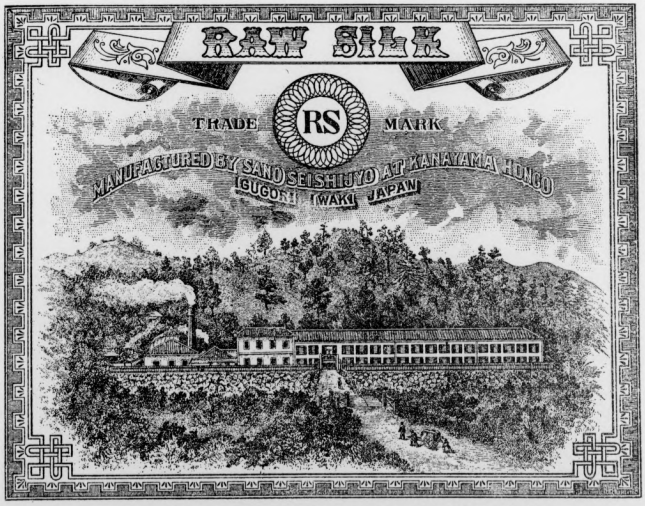


THE PRESENT TRADE-MARK USED BY THE FIRM.



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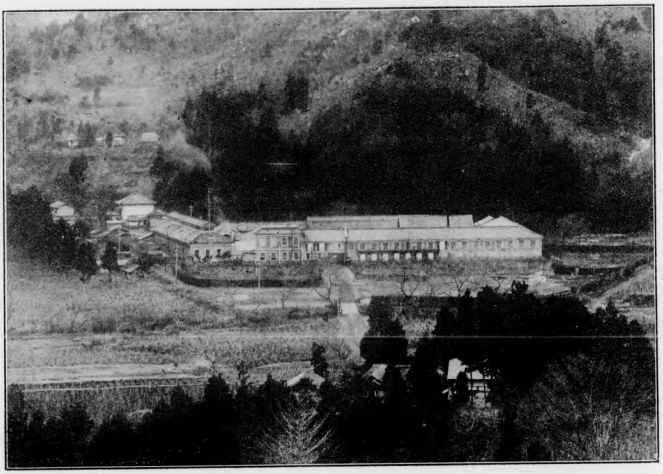

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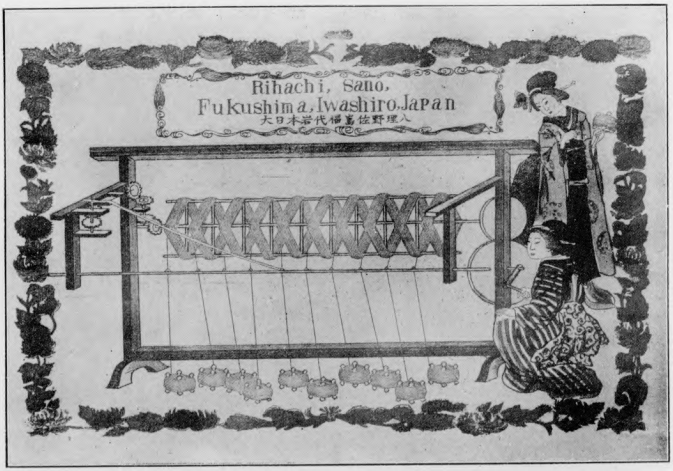

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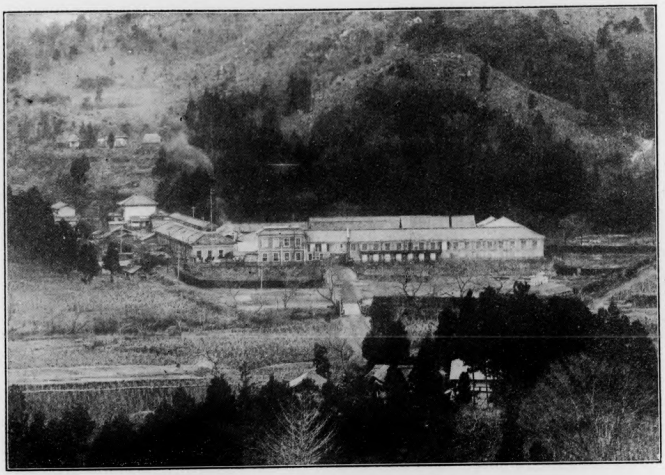

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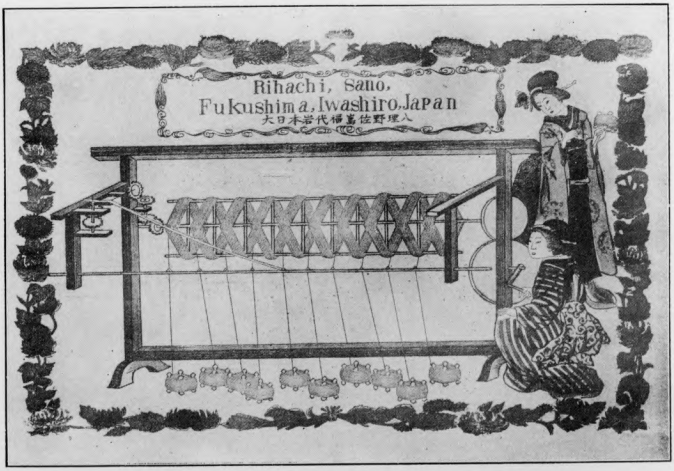
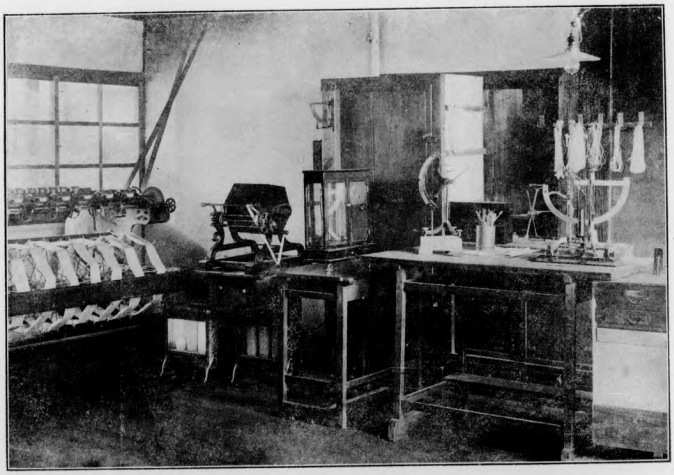


FIRST TRADE-MARK USED BY THE COMPANY.

SECOND TRADE-MARK USED BY THE FIRM.



INSPECTION HALL

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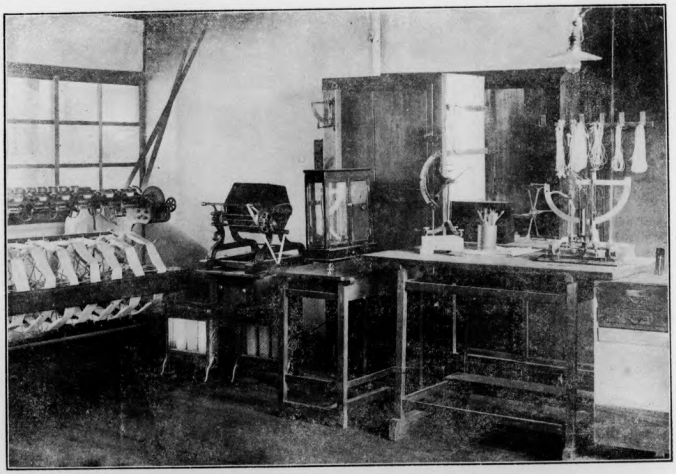

INSPECTION HALL

THIRD TRADE-MARK USED BY THE FIRM.

THE REELING FACTORY.

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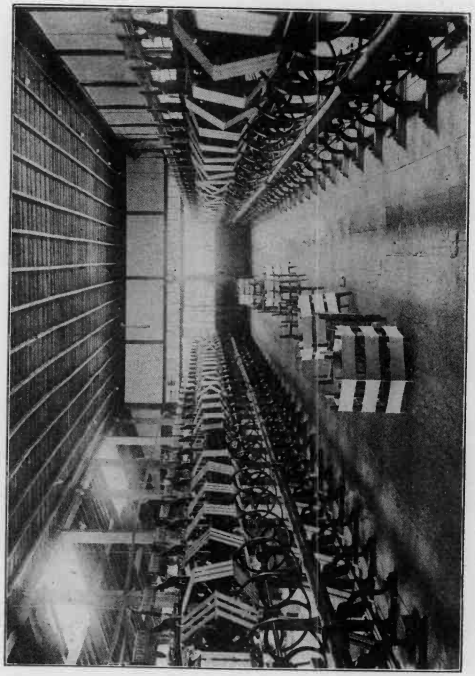
THE REELING FACTORY.



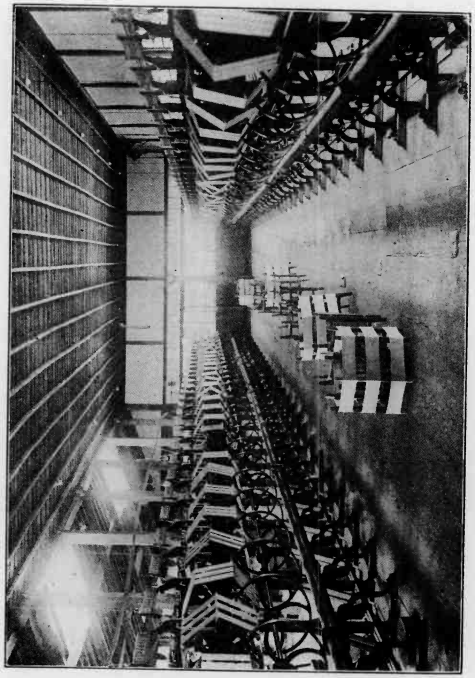
RE-REELING FACTORY.

The Late Mr. R. Sano and the Silk Trade between America and Japan.

THE late Mr. Rihachi Sano was not only the pioneer of Japan's export trade in raw silk, but was one of the foremost men in developing the country's silk industry, in which he introduced various reforms. It is scarcely necessary to point out that the silk industry has attained a remarkable development since the Restoration of 1868, and the name of Mr. Rihachi Sano will for all time be associated with the history of the silk export trade. Below is an abridged sketch of the life of the late Mr. Sano, who was instrumental in establishing closer commercial relations between the United States and Japan.

THE ORIGIN OF RE-REEL SILK.

In the third year of the Bunkyu Era (A.D. 1863), the late Mr. Sano, as representative of the Kyoto branch of the Tonomura Shoten, visited Iwashiro province, Fukushima Prefecture, on a commercial mission, when he found the raw silk produced in the province to be of excellent quality, but the process of manufacture was defective. In September, 1872, when he was appointed President of the now defunct Ono & Co., in the North-eastern district of Japan, he noticed that no improvement whatever had been effected in the manufacture of a raw silk known as "teppo-ito," produced in Iwashiro province, and that the demand for this quality abroad was gradually diminishing. He recognized that if machinery were



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adopted in place of manual labour there would be greater profits, but he refrained from taking this step, fearing that conditions in the district would not allow such a radical reform. As a first step, however, he introduced slight reforms in the method of manufacturing "teppo-ito," with the result that there was produced an excellent raw silk known as "orikaeshi-ito," or "kakeda," which is now manufactured in Iwashiro province in large quantities.

THE WORK OF REFORM.

Considerable difficulty was experienced by Mr. Sano in introducing reforms into the method of manufacturing "teppo-ito." An agitation was started against his proposals by manufacturers of raw silk, with the result that doubts and misunderstandings arose in various quarters. To make the situation worse, the firm of Ono & Co. was dissolved. Notwithstanding these difficulties, Mr. Sano pushed ahead with his reforms on a smaller scale, distributed funds among individuals engaged in the industry, and supplied them with a large number of machines free of charge. In this way he trained the local people to manufacture the raw silk under the new system, and went so far as to purchase at a specially high price silk of excellent quality, his sole aim being to develop the export of raw silk.

TRADE-MARK FOR RAW SILK.

After three years' hard work, raw silk of superior quality was raised in large quantities. In August, 1875, Mr. Sano first forwarded to Yokohama a quantity of the silk, a trade-mark representing Japanese girls engaged in the manufacturing process being adopted. This was the first time a trade-mark was used on raw silk in Japan, a specimen being shown in a photograph published herewith.

The use of a trade-mark for raw silk has proved successful, many foreign merchants of Yokohama purchasing raw silk with this stamp and shipping it in large quantities to America and Europe, where it soon became popular with weavers. Since then, many orders have been received from abroad. On the Japanese market the labelled raw silk has also become very popular. It is generally admitted that the development in the manufacture of a raw silk known as "zakuri-ito," produced in Gumma Prefecture, was mainly due to the labelled raw silk in Fukushima Prefecture, and there are many instances where the brand was taken as a standard. The trade-mark, representing Japanese girls, was later abused in various quarters in Japan, and this was the reason for its replacement by one representing Japanese wrestlers and an eagle, as shown in photographs herewith.

DIRECT EXPORT.

For the first time in the annals of the export trade in raw silk, the late Mr. Sano shipped in December, 1876, under the protection of the Home Department, 600 kin of the improved variety of raw silk to Messrs. Frank Cheney & Co., South Manchester, Connecticut, U.S.A., thus becoming the pioneer in the direct export of raw silk. Prior to this, many Japanese merchants and manufacturers had committed irregularities in shipping raw silk, with the result that the export trade was seriously handicapped. Mr. Sano regretted this, and approached the Department of Home Affairs with a request to protect the direct export trade, a request which was at once acquiesced in by the authorties.

A FAVOURABLE COMMENT ON IMPROVED RAW SILK.

In March, 1877, the late Mr. Sano received a communication from Messrs. Frank Cheney & Co. in

regard to the 600 kin of improved variety of raw silk. It pointed out, among other things, that if Mr. Sano continued to supply the Company with raw silk of such quality as was shipped in December, 1876, there would no longer be any necessity for American weavers to import raw silk from Italy, France and other countries. The Japanese raw silk was described as snowy white and fit for use in various ways. The American weavers were therefore desirous of using the Japanese raw silk, and hoped Mr. Sano would ship direct to America the improved raw silk in large quantities.

On receipt of this favourable communication, Mr. Sano, Proprietor of the Nihonmatsu Silk Filature in Fukushima Prefecture, sent to the United States two of the staff to open a Sales Department in New York. The result was he was able to export to America from 50,000 to 60,000 kin of raw silk each year, and later received several letters of appreciation from American weavers. It is highly gratifying to note that upwards of 70 per cent. of Japanese manufacturers are now engaged in the manufacture of raw silk for shipment to the United States.

It may be noted in this connection that the *Jiji Shimpo* (a leading Japanese newspaper published in Tokyo) of July 6th, 1909, printed an article entitled "The Development of Japan's Silk Trade," in which it pointed out that the late Mr. R. Sano was the pioneer of the direct export trade in raw silk, and as early as 1876 shipped to America 600 kin of raw silk, etc.

THE SANO SILK FILATURE.

The Sano Silk Filature was established by the late Mr. Sano in 1885, and commenced operations on July 16th, 1886. Mr. Sano was decorated by the late Meiji Emperor with the Sixth Class Order of the Sacred Treasure, the Honorable Medal with Blue

Ribbon, and the Supreme Honorable Medal with Blue Ribbon in appreciation of his services in developing the silk industry and the silk export trade of Japan. He was also presented by His Majesty with a set of special silver cups.

The Sano Silk Filature has its main factory at Kanayama-machi, Igu district, Miyagi Prefecture, and two branches at Nakamura-machi, Soma district, Fukushima Prefecture. In these factories there are 355 reeling machines, of which 96 are French machines supplied by J. Berthand & Co., Lyons, and the remaining 259 are of Japanese manufacture.

The late Mr. Sano died on August 14th, 1915, and the Sano Silk Filature is now under charge of his son, Mr. Rihachi Sano. There are in the factories 70 male and 430 female operatives. Raw silk manufactured by the Sano Filature is of the Double Grand Extra standard, and its annual output amounts to 85,000 kin, valued at ¥1,500,000. The output is largely forwarded to principal silk-weaving factories in the United States, where it is used for the making of silk cloth of superior quality.

Attention is called to the fact that in 1897 the late Mr. R. Sano established a Meteorological Observatory in the compound of the main factory at Kanayama-machi for the benefit of the public.

REWARDS AND HONORS.

Raw silk turned out by the Sano Filature won the First Class Medal at the Third Domestic Industrial Exhibition in 1890; a Medal of Honor at the Chicago Exhibition in 1893; the First Class Medal at the 31st Agricultural Products Competitive Exhibition held under the auspices of the Japan Agricultural Association in 1895; a Gold Medal of Honor at the Fourth Domestic Industrial Exhibition in 1895; the First Class

Gold Cup at the United Exhibition in the North-eastern district of Japan in 1897; the Grand Prize at the St. Louis Exhibition in 1904; the Grand Prize at the Alaska-Yukon Pacific Exposition in 1909; the Superior Medal at the Silk Competitive Exhibition in Miyagi Prefecture in 1911; the First Class Medal at the local Special Products Exhibition in the same Prefecture in 1912; the Grand Medal of Honor at the Taisho Exhibition in Tokyo in 1914; the Superior Medal at the Fifth Competitive Exhibition held under the auspices of the Miyagi branch of the Japan Silk Association in 1915; the First Class Gold Medal at the local Exhibition held under the management of the Yamagata Prefectural authorities in 1916; the First Class Gold Medal at the Industrial Exhibition held under the auspices of the Industrial Association in Miyagi Prefecture in 1917; and a Special Superior Medal at the Sixth Competitive Exhibition held under the auspices of the Miyagi branch of the Japan Silk Association in 1917. It may be noted that in October, 1915, when the present Emperor visited the city of Sendai in connection with the military manœuvres in the North-eastern district, the Sano Silk Filature had the honour of presenting its output for inspection by his Majesty.

TESTIMONY TO THE LATE MR. R. SANO.

Under date of July 22, 1869, the late Mr. R. Sano, the second son of Mr. Kyoi Sano, at Sano-mura, Kanzaki district, received the following note from Mr. Tokinosuke Yanagisawa, the Feudal Lord of Koriyama, Yamato province, under whose jurisdiction Mr. R. Sano resided at the time:—

"Since boyhood you have been in the service of Mr. Yozaemon Tonomura for over ten years. Unfortunately your father, Kyoi, contracted heavy debts during his lifetime. In appreciation of your filial piety to your father and of faithful service to your master, Mr. Sotomura, a pecuniary reward and a bale of rice is hereby presented to you."

On June 18th, 1876, when the late Meiji Emperor visited the Nihonmatsu Silk Filature during a tour of inspection in the North-eastern district, His Majesty received in audience Mr. R. Sano, Proprietor of the Filature, and granted him the following message:—

"Since the establishment of the Sano Silk Filature you have not only worked hard for the development of your business, but have taken much trouble in improving the methods of producing raw silk, thereby setting an example to all parties. His Majesty is highly satisfied with your energetic efforts and hopes you will continue to exert yourself for the benefit of the State."

Accompanying the above message was a pecuniary reward of ¥50 and a special gift of ¥25.

On February 22nd, 1902, the late Meiji Emperor was pleased to decorate the late Mr. R. Sano with the Sixth Class Order of the Sacred Treasure in appreciation of his services in promoting the interests of the State, commercially and economically. On that occasion Baron E. Shibusawa and seventeen other leading business men, including Mr. R. Sano, were decorated by His Majesty in recognition of their efforts in developing the domestic industries and the country's foreign trade.

At the Chicago Exhibition of 1893 the late Mr. R. Sano was awarded an honorary prize for raw silk shown at the Exhibition.

At the Fourth Domestic Exhibition, held in Kyoto in 1895, the late Mr. Sano received an Honorary Gold Medal for raw silk shown.

On August 13th, 1915, the day previous to his death, Mr. R. Sano was presented by the present Emperor with the Supreme Medal with Blue Ribbon, the highest Order given commercial and industrial men, in appreciation of his remarkable services in improving the

method of raising silkworms of excellent quality and developing the silk industry, and also establishing a Meteorological Observatory in the compound of his Filature for the benefit of the public. (Holders of the Supreme Metal in Japan are very few.)

Under the same date the late Mr. Sano was presented by the Imperial Court with a set of silver cups.

MR. RIHACHI SANO, JUNR., AS LEADER OF THE SILK INDUSTRY.

Mr. Rihachi Sano, the son and heir of the late Mr. R. Sano, has won for himself the honor of being the leader in the silk industrial circles of Japan.

On New Year's Day, 1919, the *Kokumin Shimbun*, a leading Japanese newspaper published in Tokyo, printed a list of names of a hundred leaders in various walks of life in Japan, these being selected by a general vote of its readers throughout the country.

Among the leaders selected was Mr. Rihachi Sano, who is described as "the foremost man in the silk industry of Japan and the present proprietor of the Sano Silk Filature in Fukushima Prefecture." In addition to his silk business, Mr. Sano has under his charge the Kanayama Meteorological Observatory, established by his father. In the summer of 1918 Mr. R. Sano contributed ¥20,000 towards the funds for the establishment by the Japanese authorities of a Meteorological Observatory and the inauguration of a Chair of Meteorology in the Tohoku University in the North-eastern district. Mr. Sano is a man of enlightened views and is now closely studying atmospheric effects on the raising of silk. He resides at Kaya-cho, Shitaya (Uyeno Park), Tokyo.

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